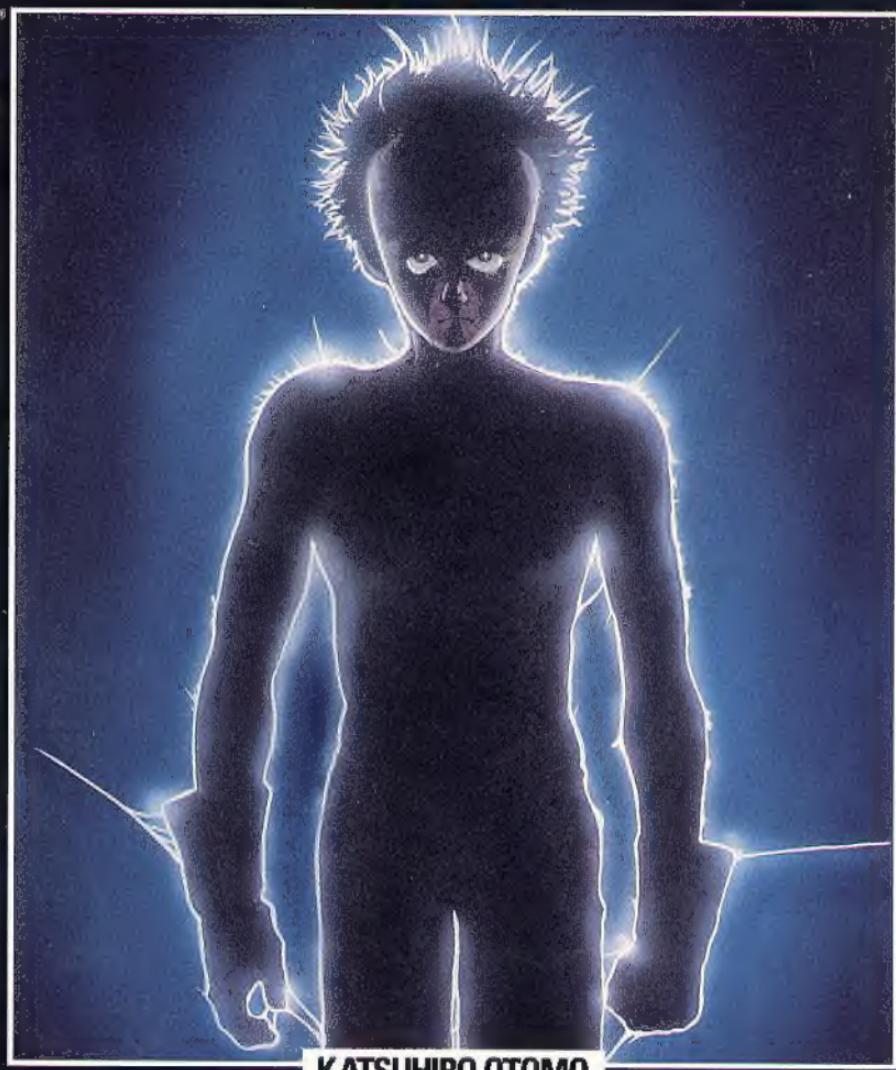


AKIRA

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AKIRA

BY KATSUHIRO OTOMO

Chapter 3

NUMBER 41!

WHAT HAS GONE BEFORE



The year is 2030. The world is rebuilding from World War III. In **Neo-Tokyo**, plans are being made to hold the next Olympics in the "old city"—where, thirty-eight years before, the first of the bombs fell.

Kaneda and his friends—teenaged delinquents from the local vocational school—have made an unauthorized motor-

cycle run into the old city to check out the old site and found far more than they expected. In an area said to be totally deserted, they encounter a strange, wizened-faced child, known only as **Number 26**. He is terrified of something and is possessed of extraordinary telekinetic abilities. During the encounter, the paranormal boy gravely injures **Tetsuo**, one of Kaneda's close friends. Then, he vanishes.

Kaneda's gang find themselves in serious trouble with the authorities following the incident, and they learn, to their surprise, that the "police" they encountered after the accident were not normal officers at all, but part of some secret concern. Moreover, **Tetsuo**, who they believed had been taken to a hospital, has disappeared.

The next night, at **Harukiya**, a tough local dive, **Kaneda** brazenly attempts to pick up **Kay**, a strange girl who catches his fancy. **Kay**, however, is not interested. In fact, she and her companion, **Ryu**, are part of an underground resistance organization, dedicated to learning what is happening in the old city and putting a stop to it.

During the mayhem that ensues, both the delinquents and



Kaneda



Tetsuo



Kay



Ryu



the resistance fighters again encounter **Number 26**, and again he uses his powers, to catastrophic effect. Both groups are scattered, but first **Ryu** and then **Kaneda** re-encounter **Number 26**. **Ryu** attempts to reassure the paranormal boy, but **Kaneda** is anxious to punish him for injuring **Tetsuo**.

As they argue, the mysterious soldiers pursuing **Number 26** reach the scene, armed and ready.

During the resulting firefight, **Kaneda** is separated from **Ryu** and **Number 26**, whom the soldiers are determined to recapture alive. **Kay** saves **Kaneda's** life, but **Ryu** and **Number 26** are cornered, and **Number 26** becomes increasingly ill, exhibiting all the symptoms of drug withdrawal. **Kaneda** returns the favor he owes the resistance

fighters by stealing a truck and heading back into the heart of the melee to save **Ryu** and **Number 26**.

That is when the mysterious **Colonel** in charge of the entire covert operation puts in an appearance, bringing forward his secret weapon—**Number 27**, a crippled paranormal child named **Masaru**.

Masaru astonishes the resistance fighters by addressing **Number 26** as **Takashi**. **Kay** and **Ryu** had previously assumed that **Number 26** was the Colonel's ultimate weapon—the as-yet unseen paranormal giant code-named **Akira**.

Kaneda provokes a crisis by pretending to be on the verge of killing **Takashi**, and **Takashi** responds to the stress this causes by telekinetic upheavals that virtually destroy the entire



Takashi



The Colonel



Masaru



Yamagata



area. During the course of the cataclysm, **Kaneda** is again separated from the resistance fighters, but he manages to intercept and hide a pill meant for **Takashi**, who is recaptured by the Colonel's men.

The next day, **Tetsuo** reappears in school, seemingly little the worse for his experiences. However, during the course of his treatment, it has come to the attention of **the Colonel** and his followers that **Tetsuo** has great psychic potential and would be a valuable asset to them.

Kaneda talks his girlfriend—who works in the school infirmary and keeps his entire band of delinquents supplied with drugs—into analyzing the drug intended for **Takashi**, and she tells him that it is similar in substance to what he and his friends take, but unbelievably concentrated and powerful.

Eager for action, **Kaneda**, **Tetsuo** and their gang head out for a rumble with their chief rivals—the vicious **Clown** gang.



**Kaneda's
Girl Friend**

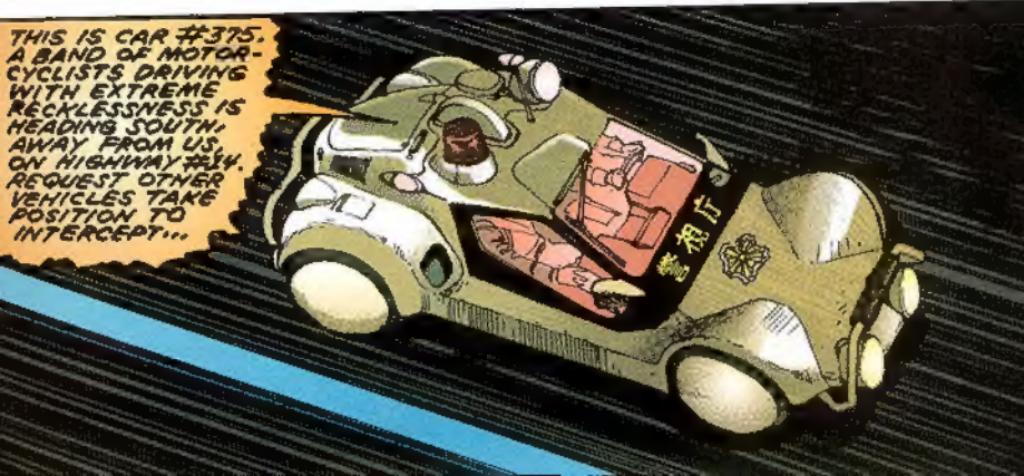
**Government
Soldier**

**Harukiya
Bartender**

**Resistance
Agent**



THIS IS CAR #375. A BAND OF MOTORCYCLISTS DRIVING WITH EXTREME RECKLESSNESS IS HEADING SOUTH, AWAY FROM US, ON HIGHWAY 744. REQUEST OTHER VEHICLES TAKE POSITION TO INTERCEPT...





DRRRRRRN



HEH-HEH-HEH...
THIS IS
GREAT!





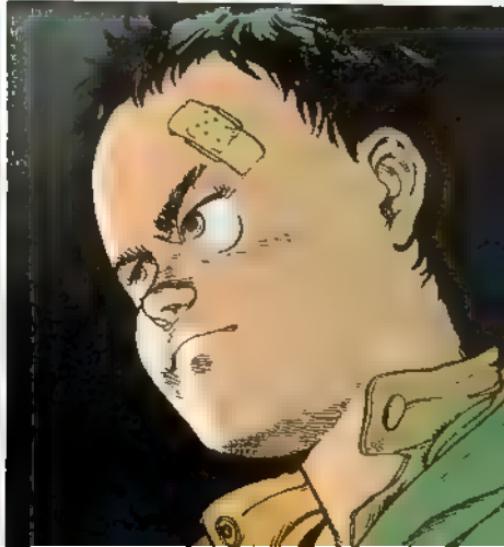
WHAT'S AMATTER,
KID, DIDN'T
ANYBODY EVER
TELL YOU IT'S
BAD MANNERS
TO GO PLAYIN'
ON SOMEONE
ELSE'S TURF?



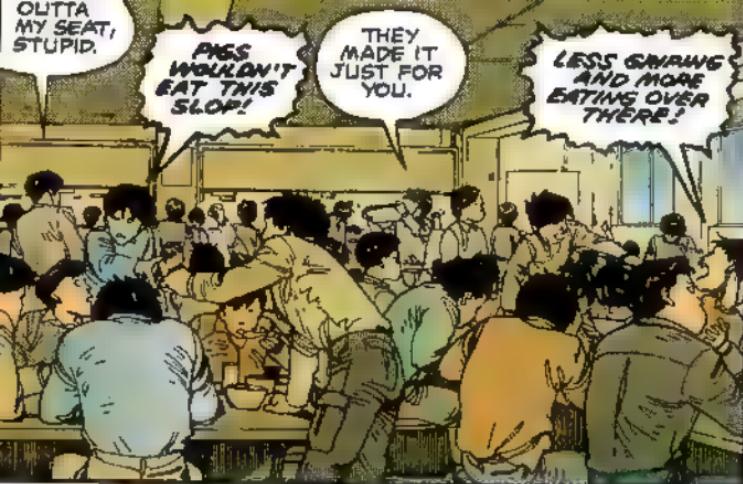










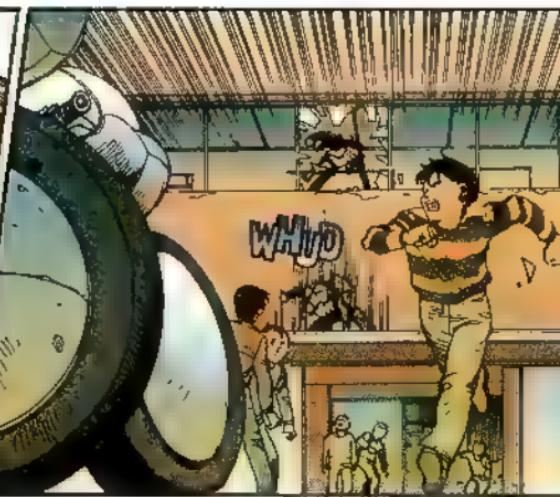
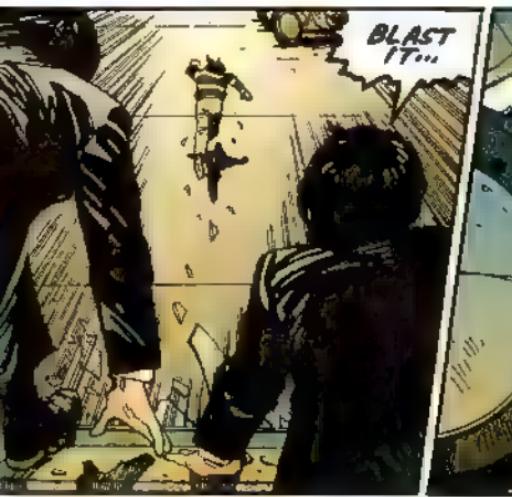


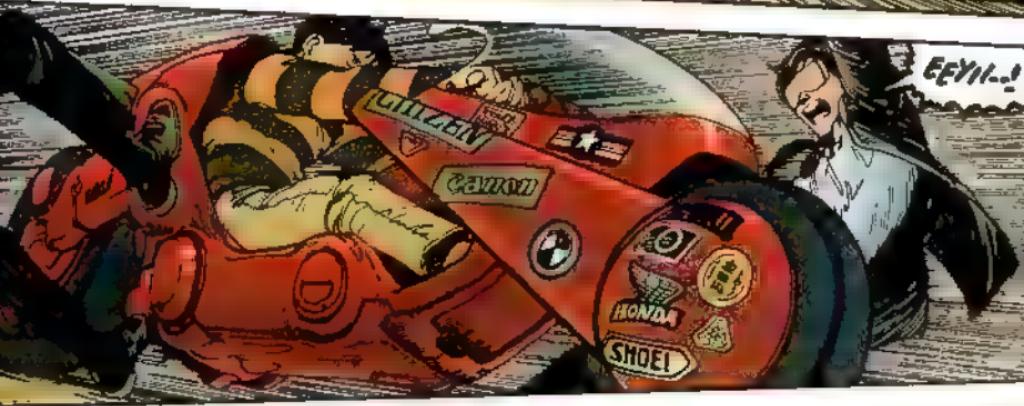


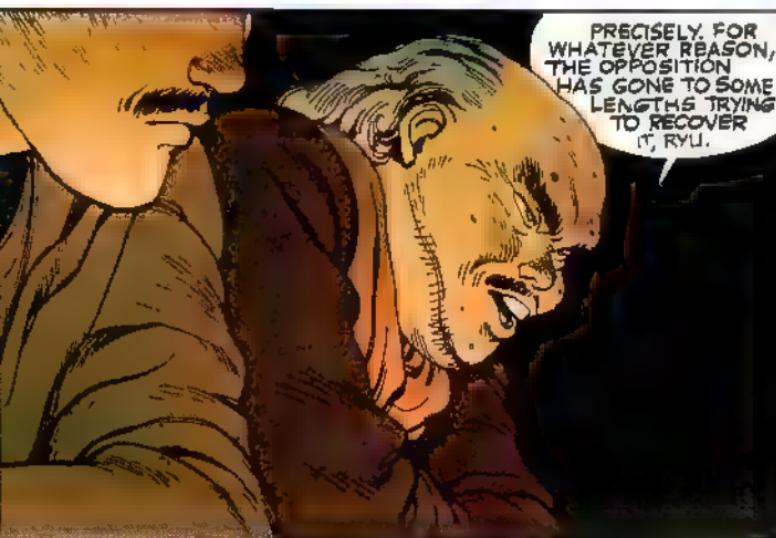
HEY! I WAS GONNA GO TO THE HOSPITAL LIKE YOU PEOPLE TOLD ME...WHAT'S THE MATTER? DON'T YOU TRUST ME?

EH...?









CONSTRUCTION
IS ALREADY
UNDERWAY,
NEZU.

AND
WHAT HAVE
YOU HEARD
ABOUT THE
NEW OLYMPIC
STADIUM
THEY'RE
BUILDING IN
THE OLD
CITY RYU?

MY SOURCES
INDICATE THAT SITE
WILL BECOME A SECRET
MILITARY INSTALLATION
AFTER THE GAMES...

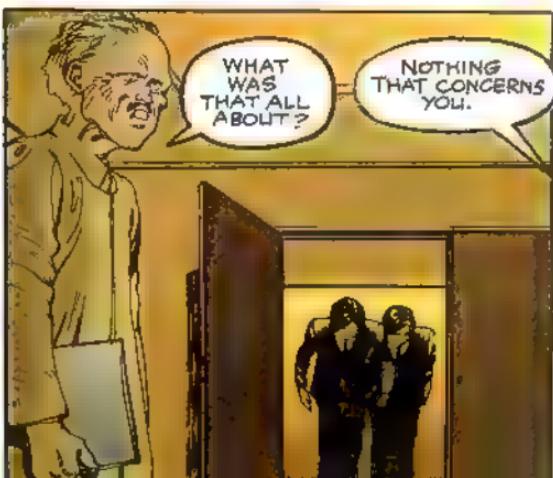
YES, WE'VE ALREADY
GIVEN THE CIVIL
AUTHORITIES ENOUGH
PROMPTING. ALL WE NEED
NOW IS SOMETHING TO
START THE PUBLIC
OUTCRY.

YOU MEAN AN
INCIDENT, NEZU?

YES. A MAJOR
INCIDENT!

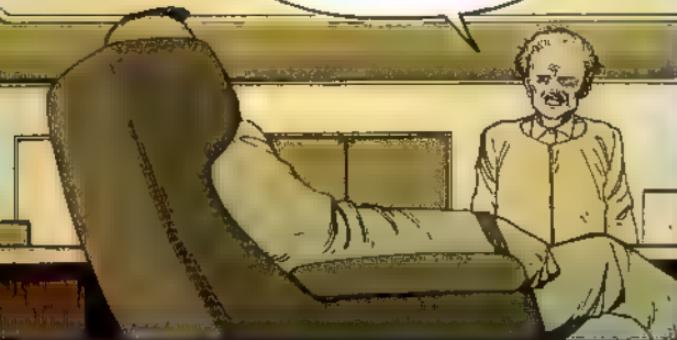


HAH!



I'VE GIVEN HIM A SEDATIVE TOMORROW. WHEN HE WAKES UP, WE CAN BEGIN INTENSIVE EXAMINATIONS.

WHEN MAY I EXPECT YOUR REPORT?



WHAT...?!



IT CAME FROM THE OLD CITY.



COULD IT HAVE BEEN THE OLYMPIC SITE?

WHUUUUUUUUUUU

AAIEEE!!

WE'VE
GOT TO GET
OUT!

SALIGHE

安全第一

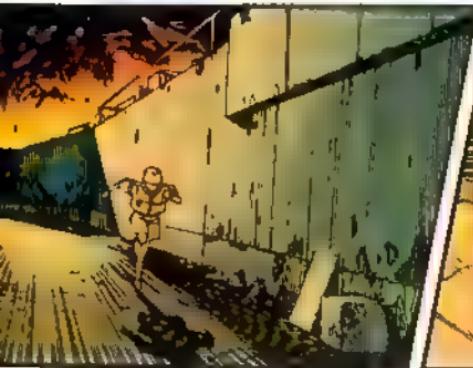
西 門

進入注意

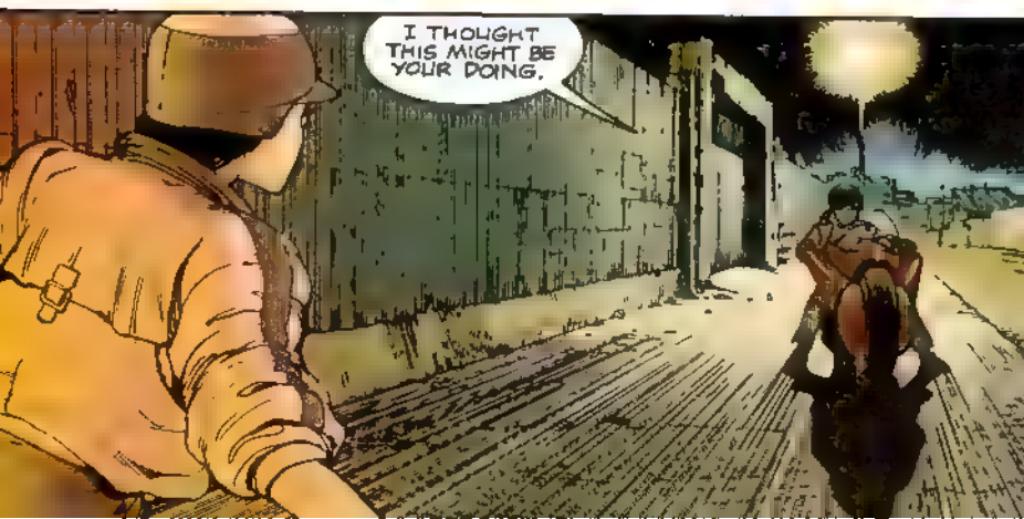
東京オリンピック
建設現場

日 豊銀

OH--



I THOUGHT
THIS MIGHT BE
YOUR DOING.



YOU!!



I'LL SAY THIS FOR
YOU GUYS. WHOEVER
YOU ARE, YOU PUT
ON A GOOD SHOW

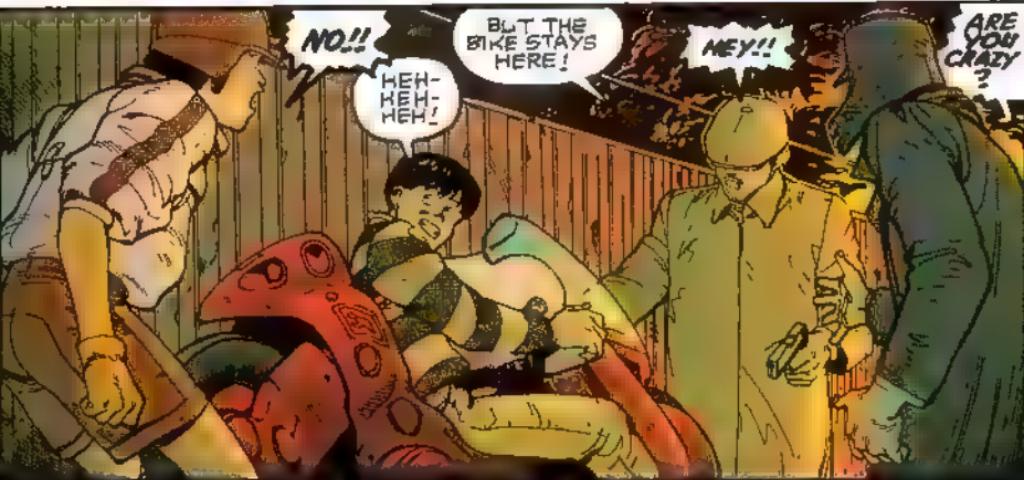


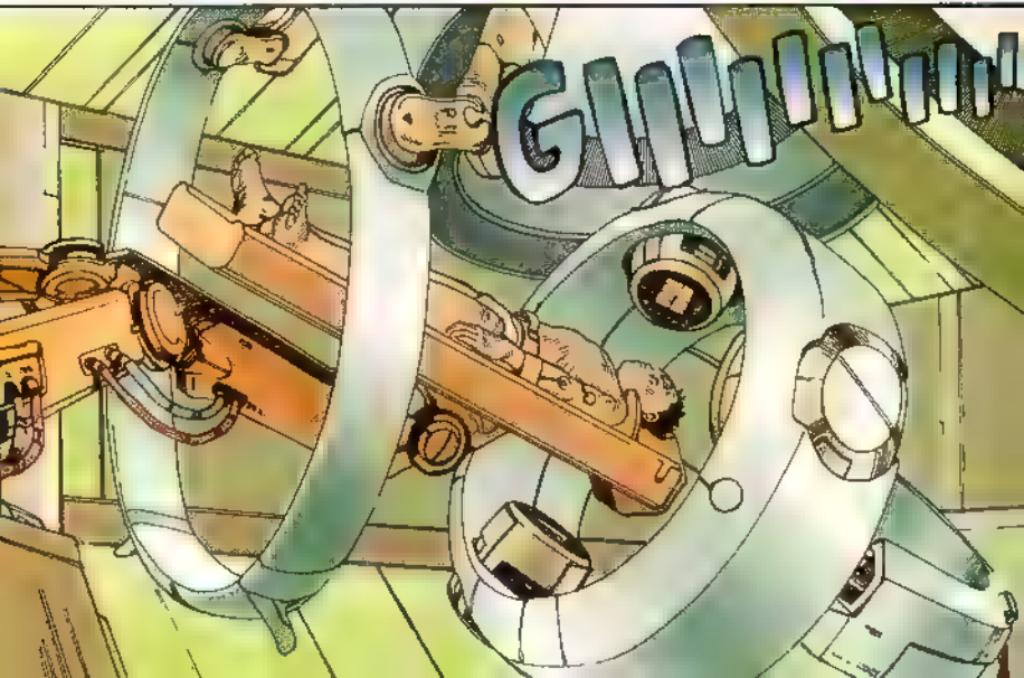
YOU KNOW
HIM?

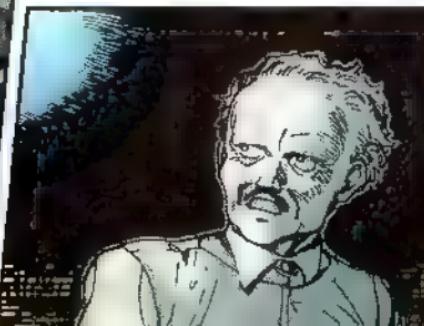
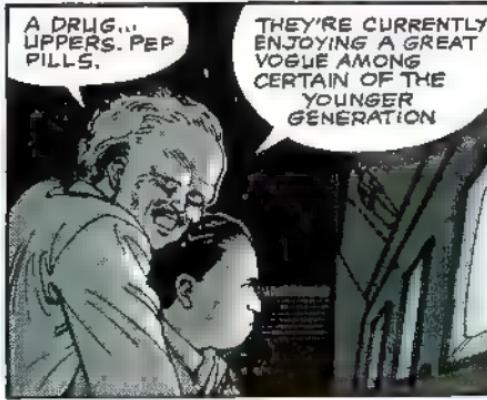
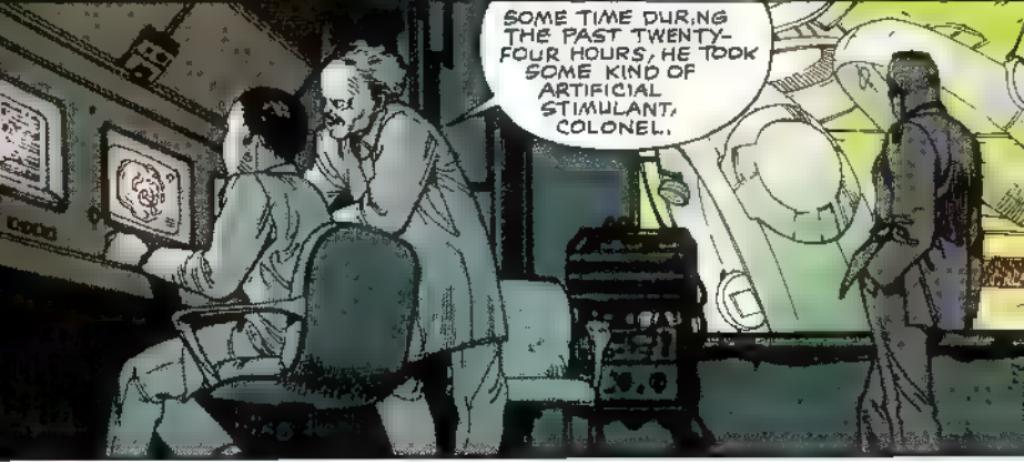
SORT
OF.

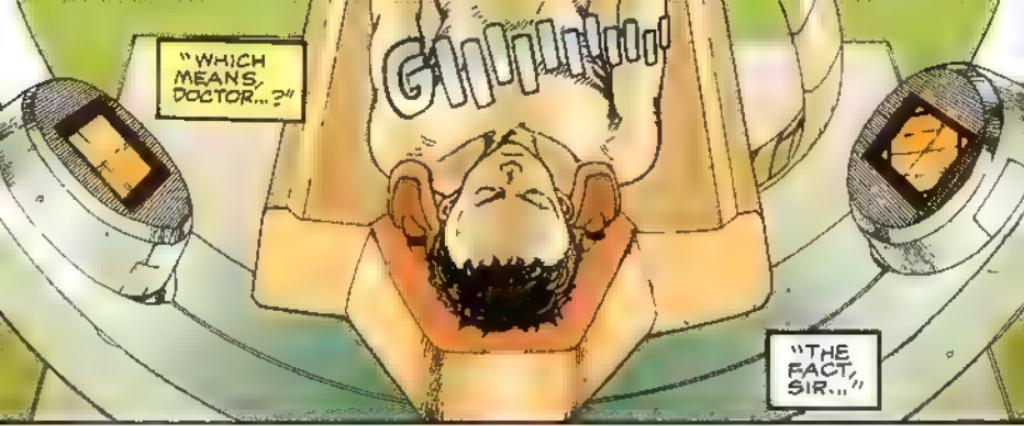
THIS IS NO
TIME FOR
TALK!



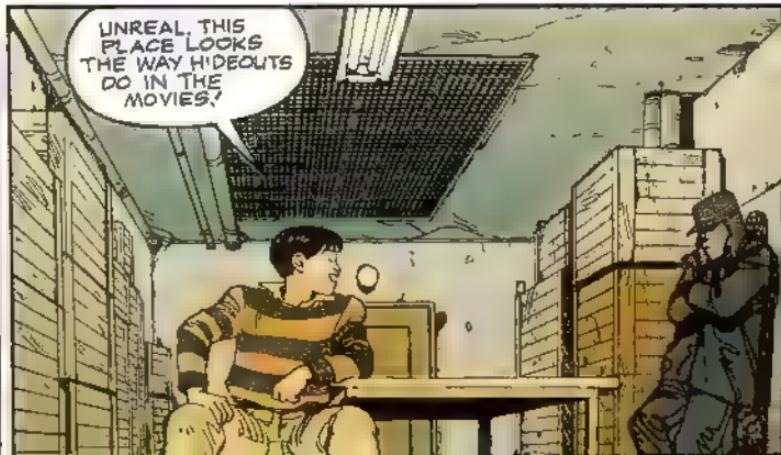
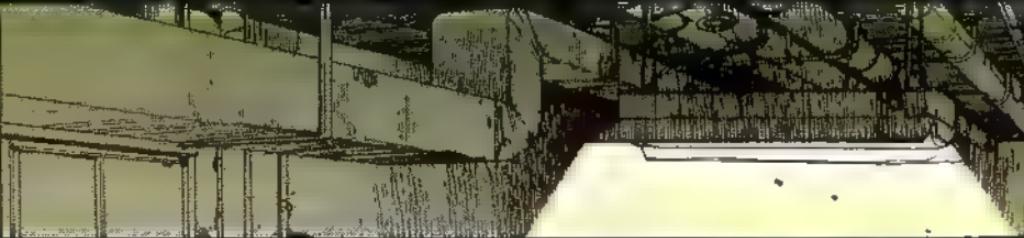
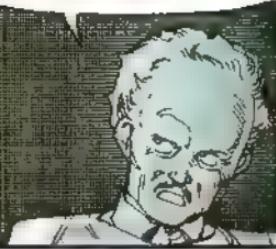


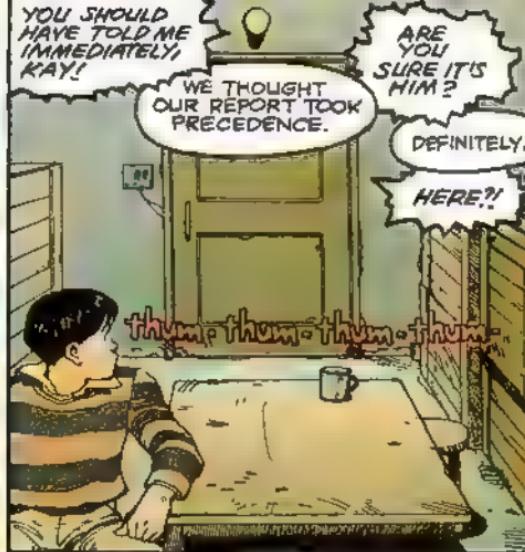






"IS THAT THIS IS THE FIRST SUCH CASE I'VE ENCOUNTERED, AND I'M AT A LOSS AS TO HOW TO PROCEED."







LOOK, I'M SORRY I PUT IT INTO MY POCKET, BUT THEN I FELL INTO THE CANAL.

SPLASH!
...REMEMBER?

I DON'T BELIEVE YOU.

THE WAY THAT WEIRD GUY, TAKASHI, KEPT GOING ON ABOUT IT, I HAD TO STEAL IT FROM HIM.

BUT WHAT WAS IT?

RYU, YOU'RE WASTING VALUABLE TIME!

KAY'S RIGHT. IT'S NOT LIKE YOU!

YOU REALLY DON'T KNOW, DO YOU?

I KEEP WORRYING ABOUT MY BIKE.

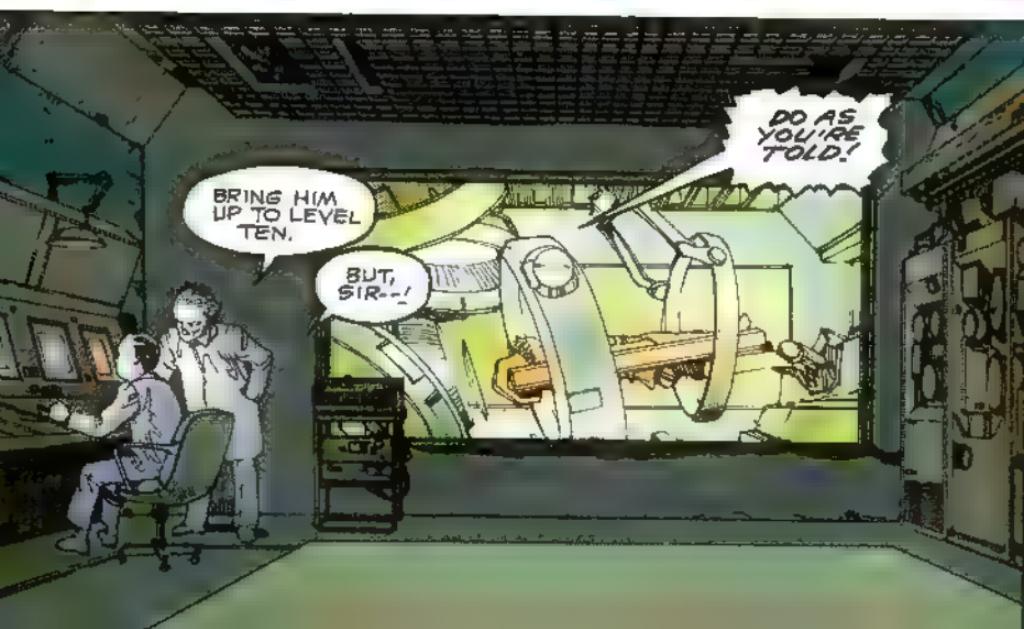
COULDN'T SOMEONE GO AND GET IT?

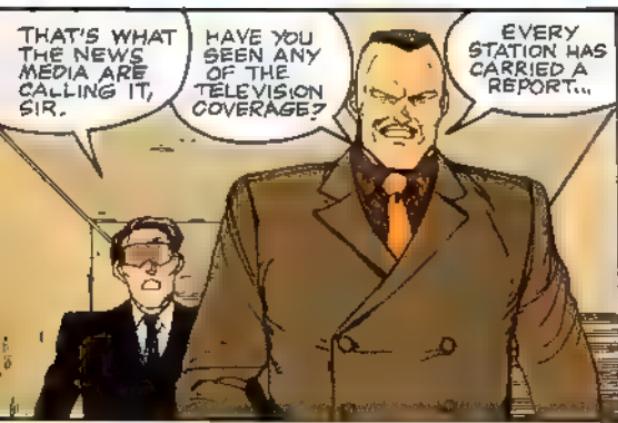
IT'S NOT THAT URGENT, YET.
LET'S REMEMBER WHICH SIDE WE'RE ON.

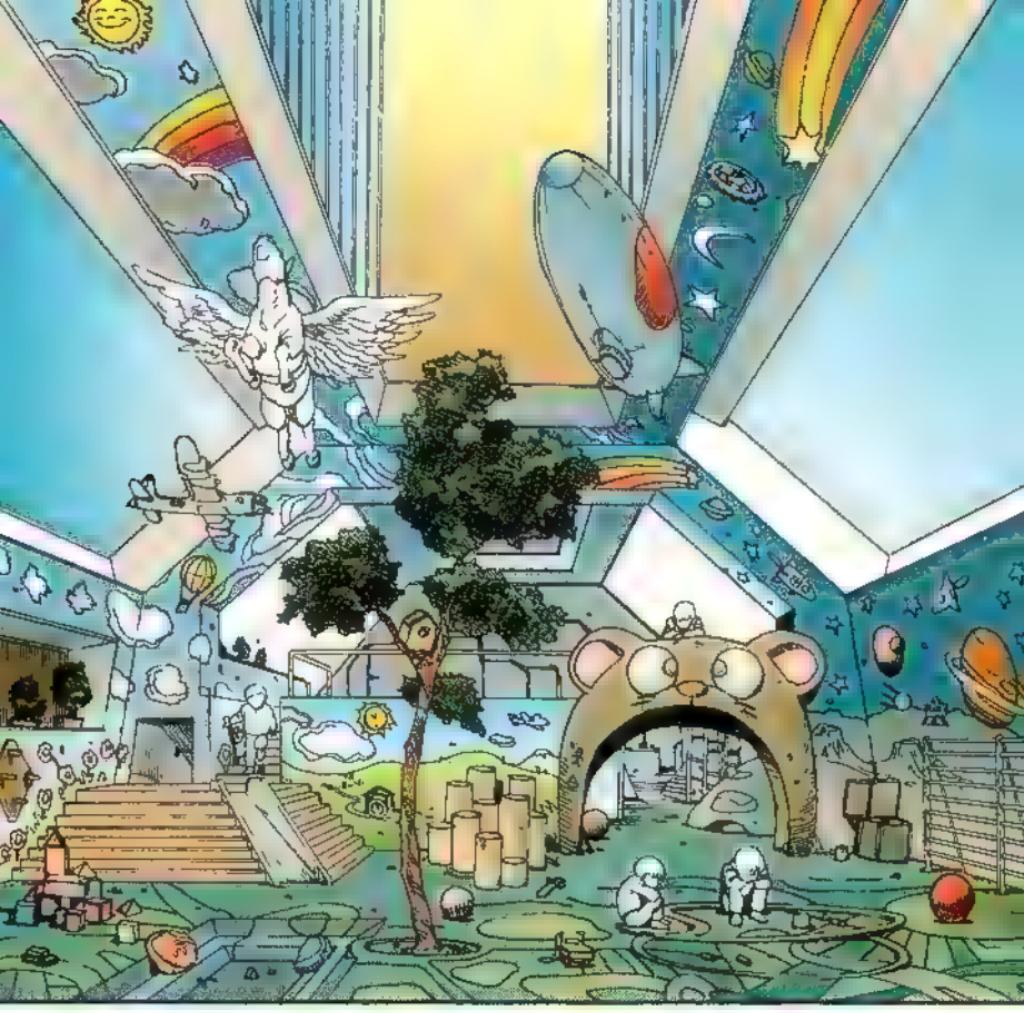
A CORPSE--HIS CORPSE--
COULD TELL US AS MUCH
AS THIS KID WILL!

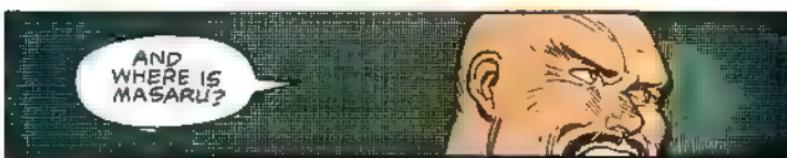
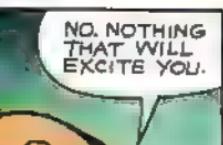
I COULD GET YOU THE TRUTH.
GIVE ME A HALF HOUR WITH HIM!

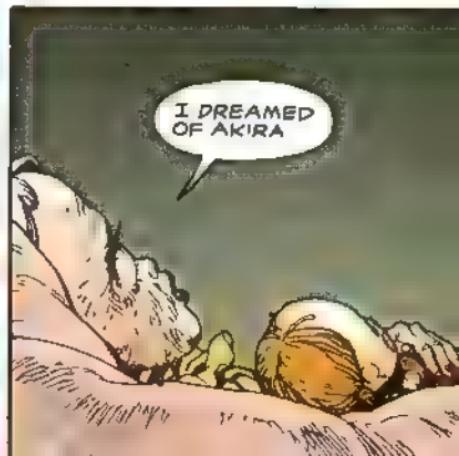
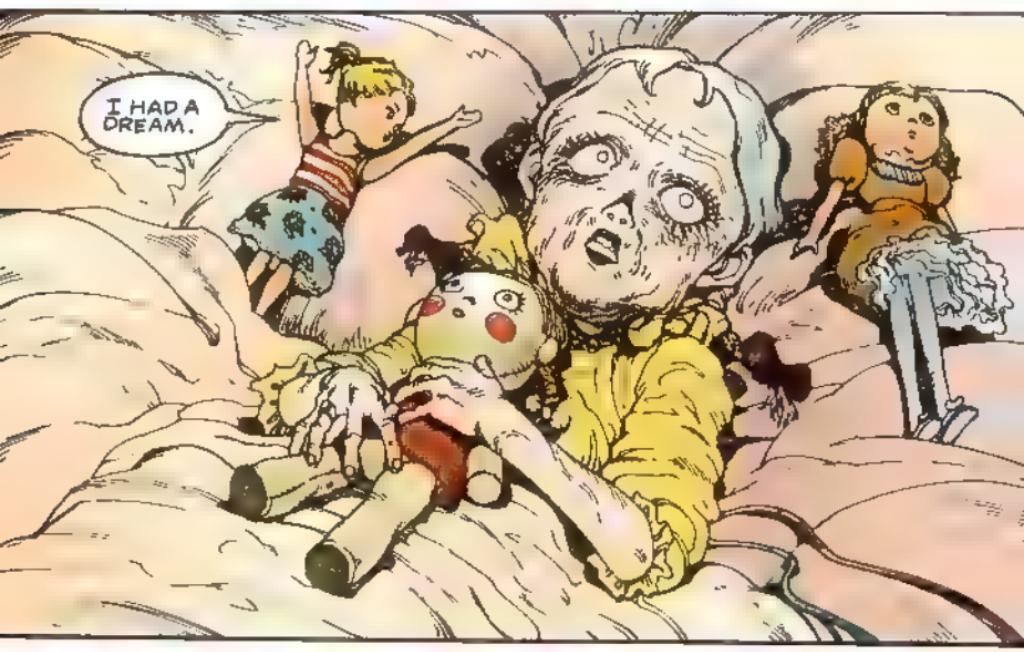
POOR BIKE,
ALL ALONE IN THE DARK.
DON'T CRY, MY
POOR LITTLE BIKE







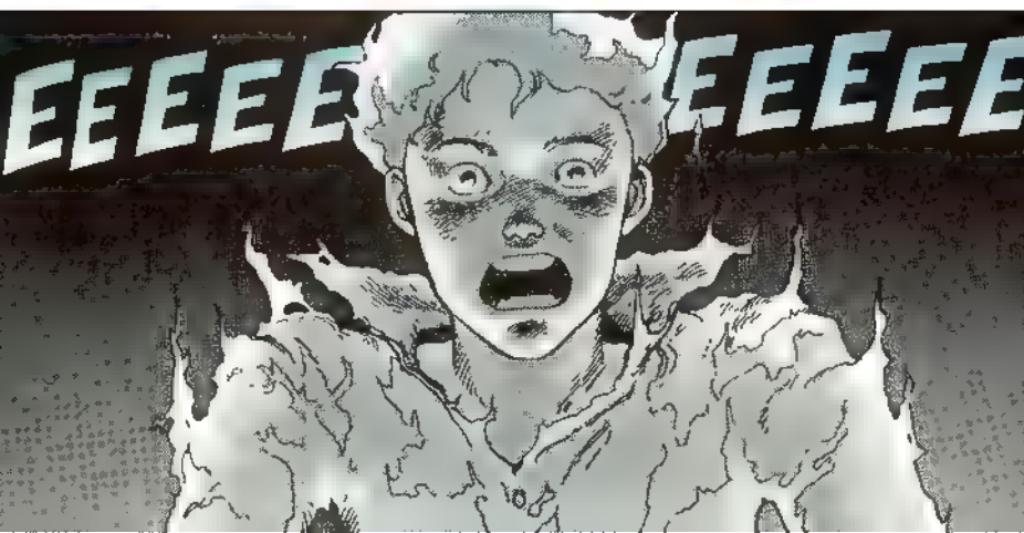




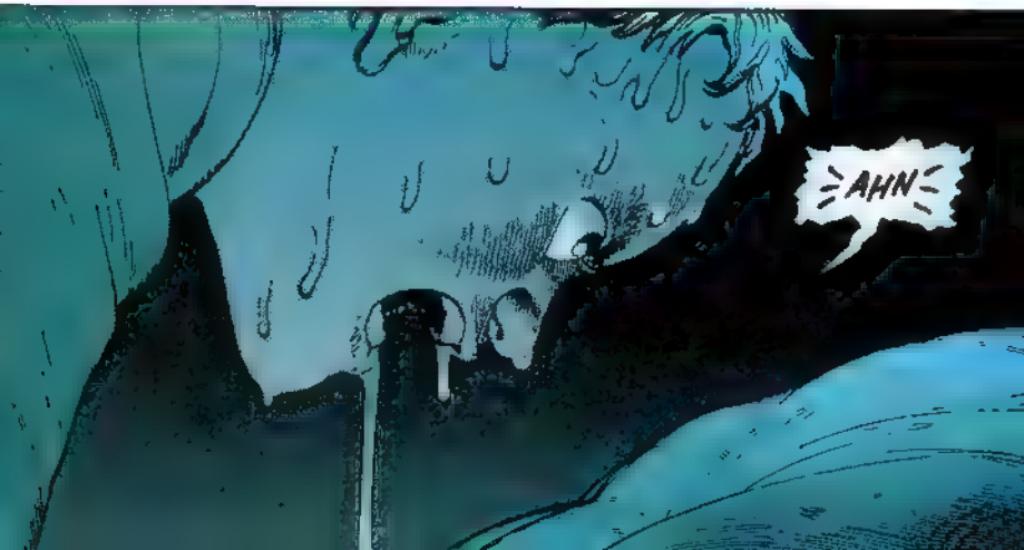


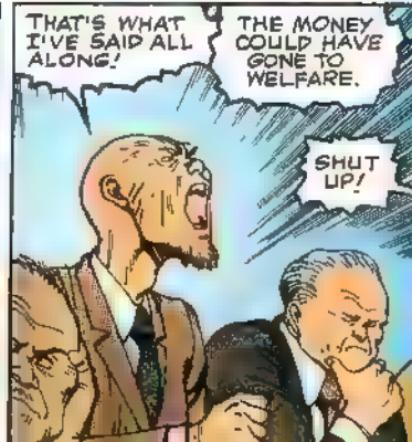
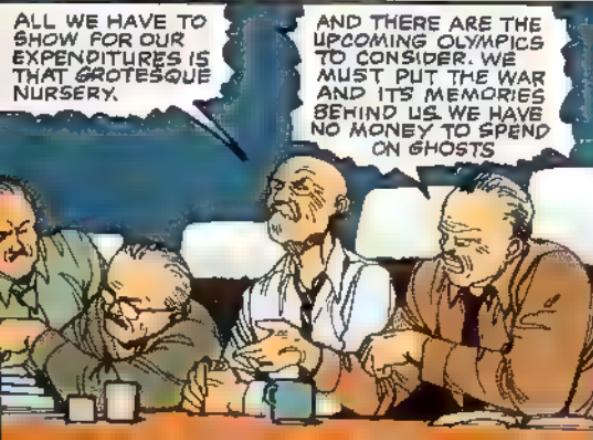
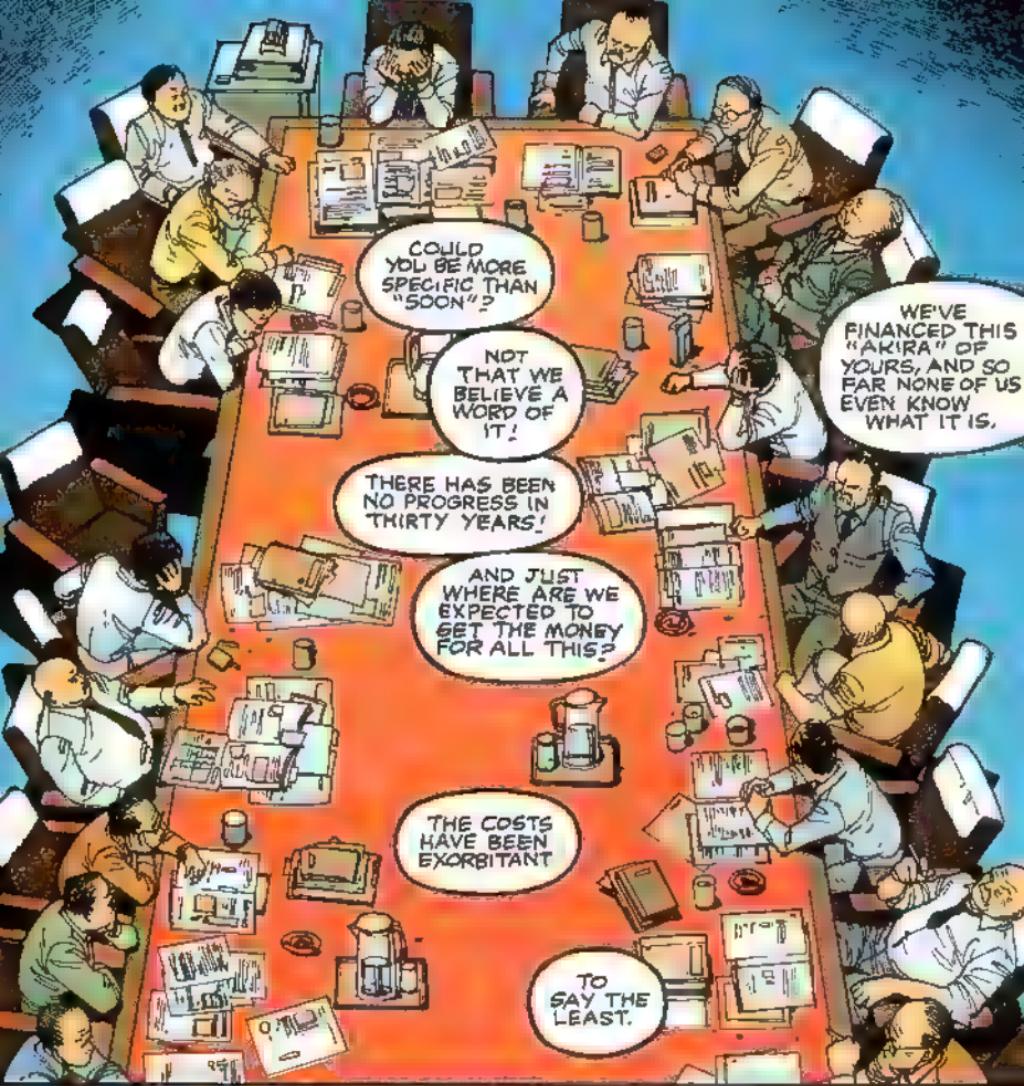


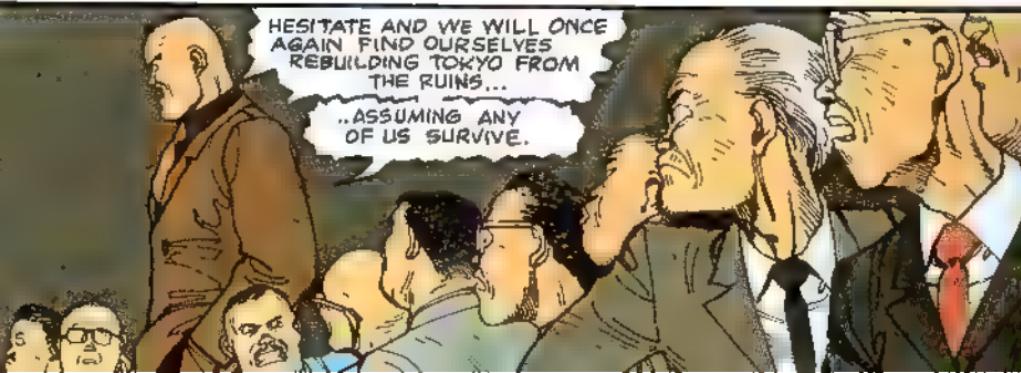
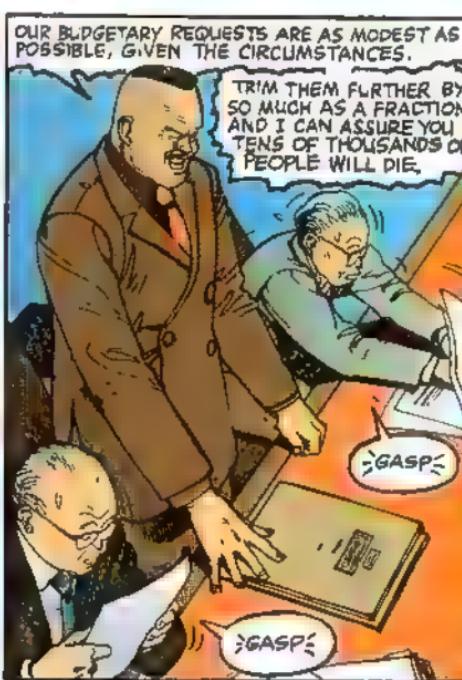
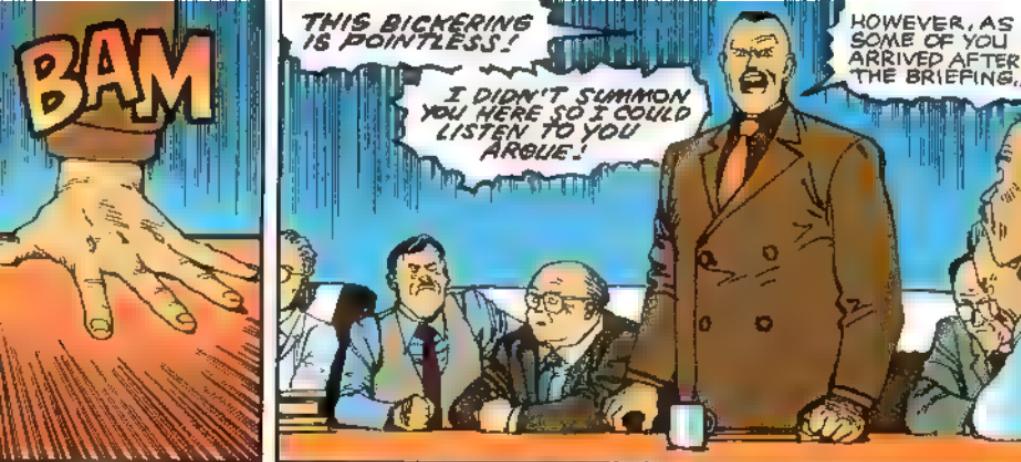


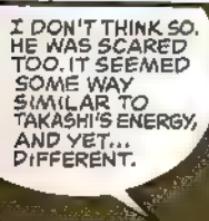


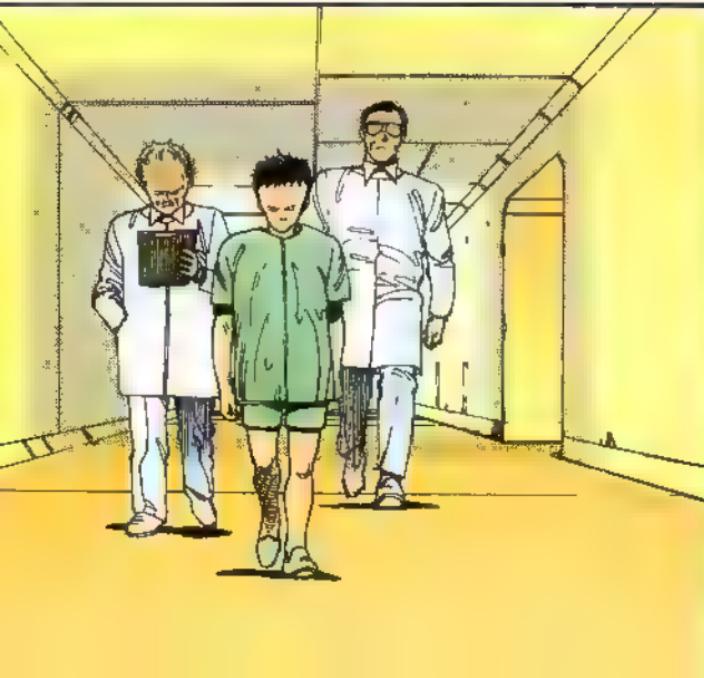








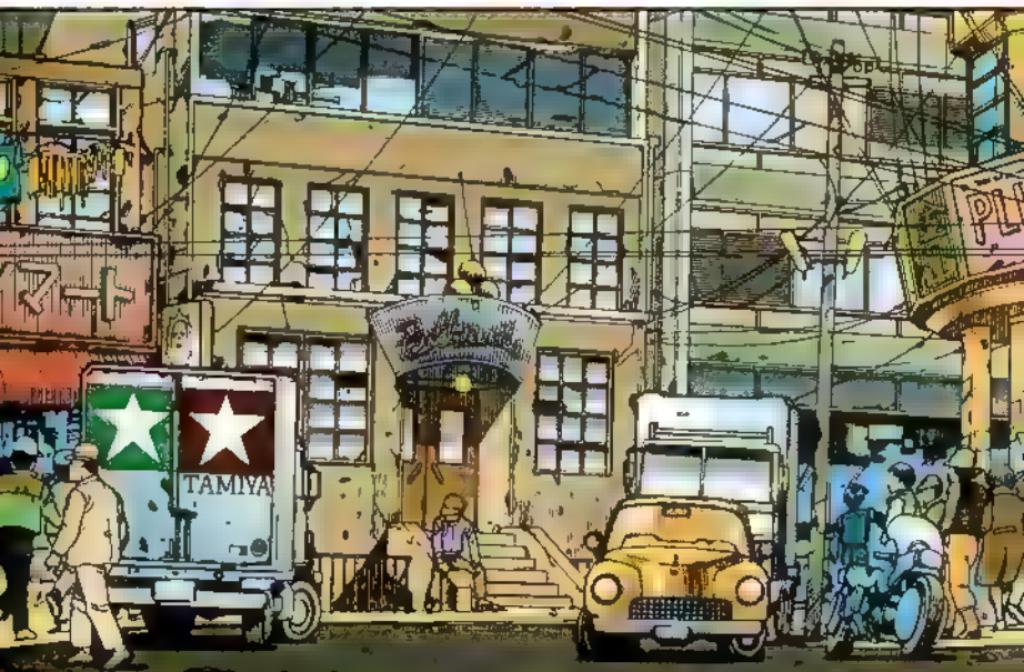


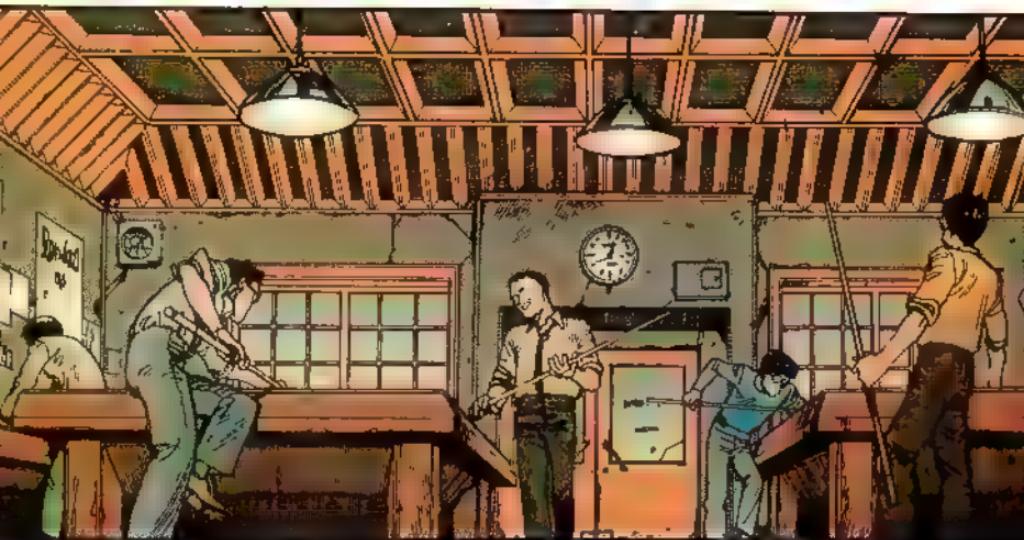


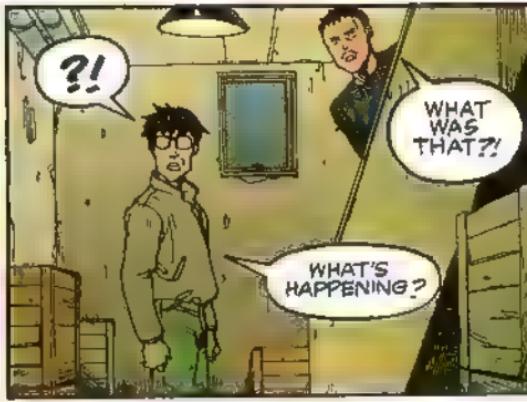
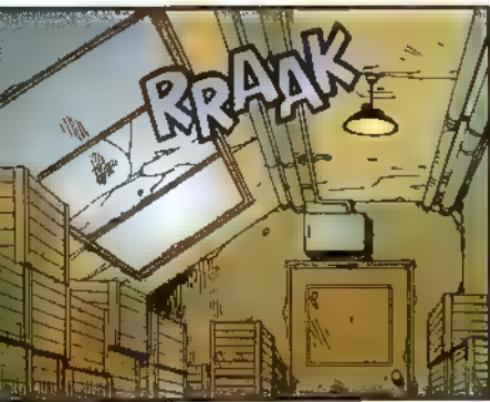
YOU GUYS ARE
DOCTORS... CAN'T
YOU FIGURE OUT
SOME WAY OF
CURING MY
HEADACHE?

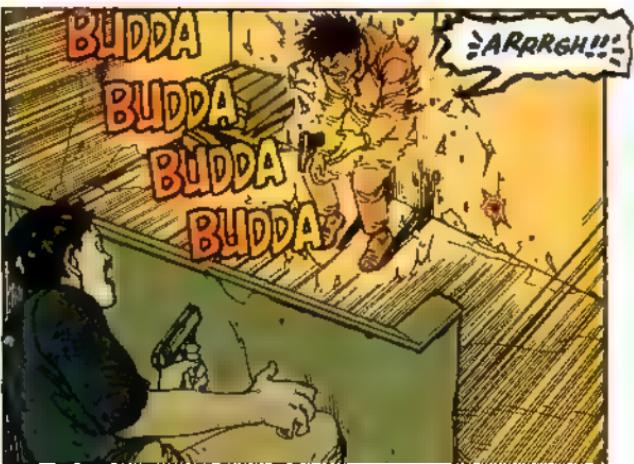
IT WILL
BE GONE
SOON
ENOUGH.

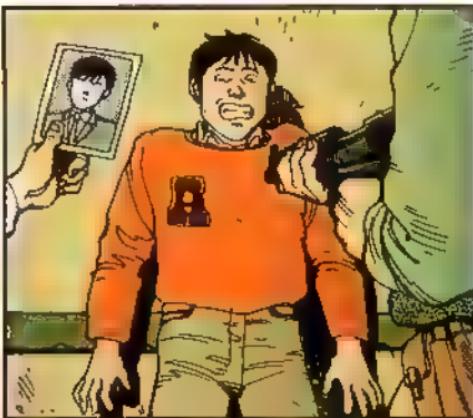
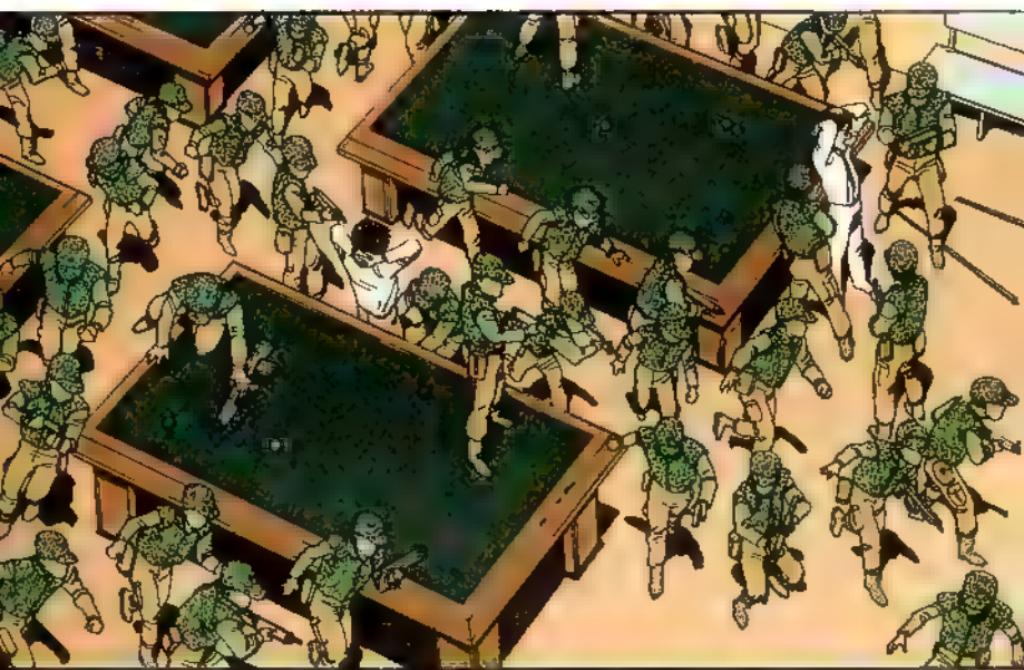
S-SURE...



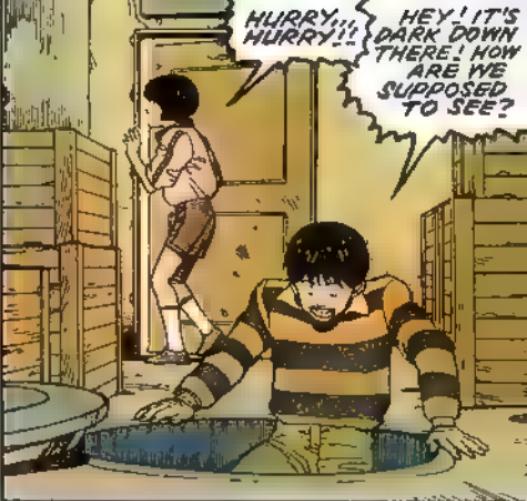


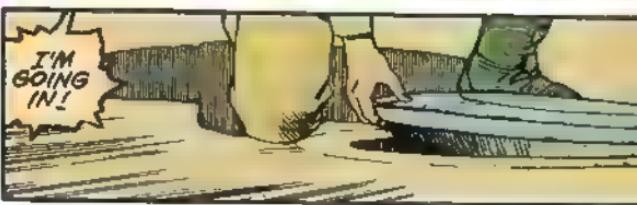


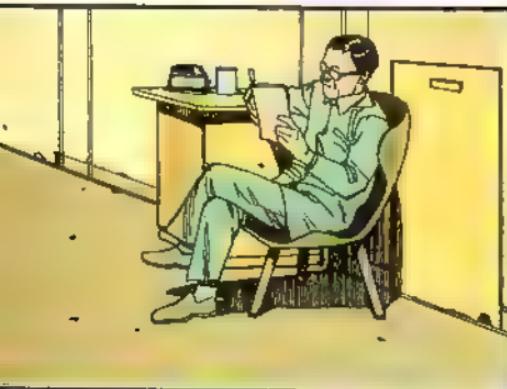
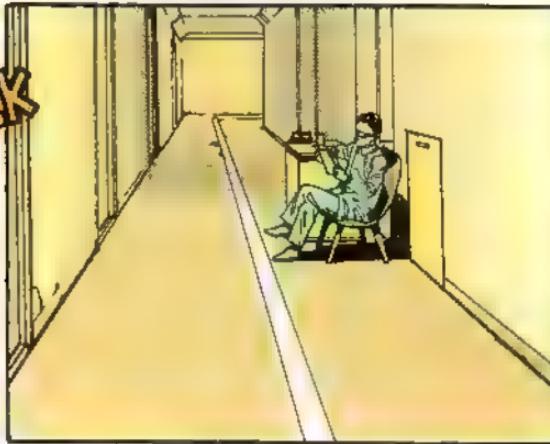






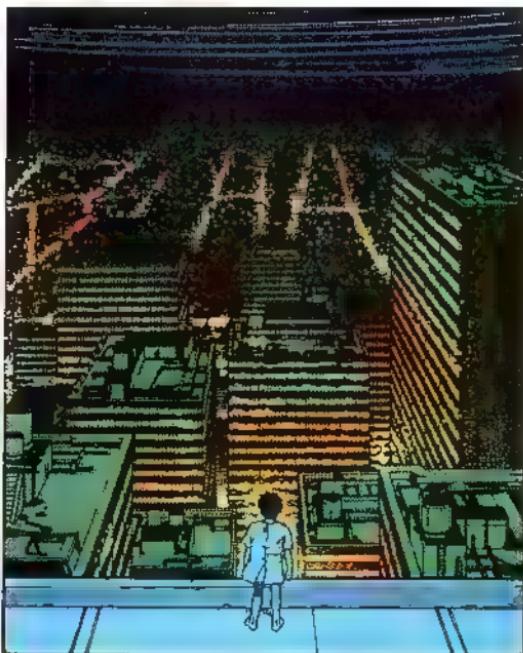






HOW...

H-HOW
DID YOU GET
OUT?

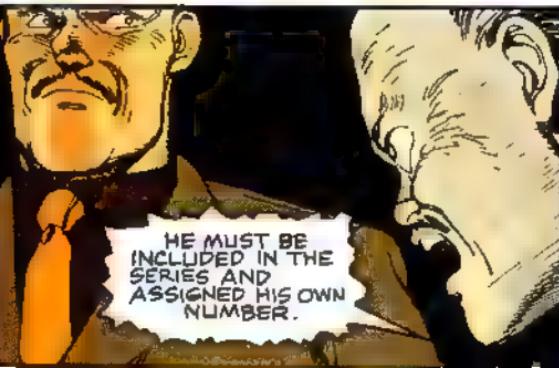
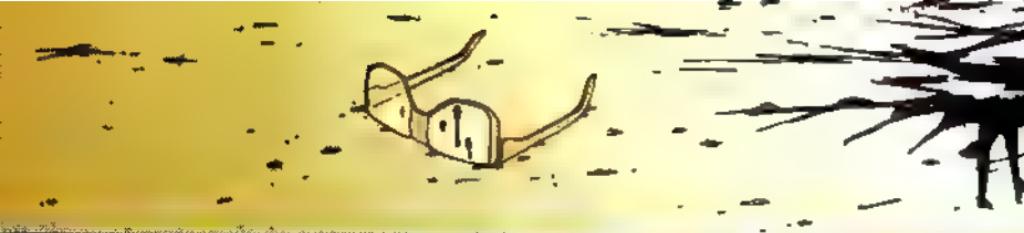






RRRUUUUUUUM









AKIRA

THE ANIMATED MOVIE

Kaneda Tetsuo, and the rest of *Akira's* large cast have sprung into life and incredible motion. Katsuhiro Otomo has brought his post World War III epic from the comics to full animation in a feature film produced through the partnership of Kodansha

Ltd., Mainichi Broadcasting System, Inc., Bandai Co., Ltd., Hakuhodo Incorporated; Toho Co., Ltd.; Laserdisc Corporation; Sumitomo Corporation; and Tokyo Movie Shinsha Co., Ltd.



Otomo at Tokyo's Imperial Hotel for the press conference announcing the production of the film.



In the United States, when a comic book or comic strip is turned into a film, the original creator's involvement will usually be limited to a consulting role. At times not even that. The final result which appears in theaters or on videotape often bears small resemblance to the creation it was based upon. No one can say that of the film version of *Akira*, which had its premiere in Tokyo on July 16th.

Katsuhiro Otomo has successfully managed the triple feat of handling the story, the screenplay (in cooperation with Izo Hashimoto), and the direction of the movie. In addition, Otomo also did the film's storyboards, taking six months off from his work on the comic's feature in order to complete this important phase of production which sets into place the story's visual and narrative flow.



Can a saga designed for 1800 pages of comics fit into two hours of onscreen time? Otomo has boldly reconstructed the comic's story line (not yet completed) keeping the same theme, but striving for greater simplicity to allow for full cinematic effect and to avoid the feeling of merely doing a 'directed version' of the comic book. Visually, Otomo admires the fluid quality of the best Disney animation and has generated over 160,000 animation cells (a half hour of TV animation utilizes about 4000 cells) to achieve the results he wanted. An epic approach for an epic in animation.

Above: the animated Takashi, Number 26.
Below: the Laboratory Building rises in the center of the Neo-Tokyo cityscape.



KATSUHIRO OTOMO

writer/illustrator

YASUMITSU SUETAKE
chief assistant to Mr. Otomo

MAKOTO SHIOSAKI
SATOSHI TAKABATAKE
assistants to Mr. Otomo

HIROSHI HIRATA
designer, AKIRA calligraph

AKIRA SAITO
designer, Kodansha edition

Kodansha Ltd.

YOKO UMEZAWA
with **LINDA M. YORK**
translation

KOICHI YURI
editor, Kodansha edition

NORIYUKI OKAZAKI
YUMA ANDO
editorial coordinators

Epic Comics

JO DUFFY
english adaptation

STEVE OLIVE
colorist

MICHAEL HIGGINS
letterer

MIKE ROCKWELL
HARRY CANDELARIO
MICHAEL HEISLER
production

MARK CHIARELLA
editorial assistant, Epic edition

ARCHIE GOODWIN
editor, Epic edition

Threads. Slowly intertwining. Coming together. Twisting tighter. The construction site for the coming Olympic games in post World War III Neo-Tokyo is rocked by an explosion, the work of anti-government rebels. In a secret government project controlled by the man known only as the Colonel, a wizened-faced child-woman awakens from a dream. Her dream is of someone called AKIRA. She dreams he will soon arise. On the streets, the young delinquent, Kaneda, object of government pursuit and rebel scrutiny, finds his authority over the motorcycle gang he leads suddenly challenged. The challenger is his friend, Tetsuo, who, following a mysterious highway accident, seems to be changing. Growing distant. Growing strange. Threads, Twisting, Tighter. Tighter until... something must break.

KATSUHIRO OTOMO'S

AKIRA



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